

Senator Bye, Representative Walker and other distinguished members of the Appropriations committee. My name is Stephanie Johnson and I am a commissioner for the African American Affairs Commission. The mission of the African-American Affairs Commission (AAAC) is to improve and promote the economic development, education, health and political well-being of the African-American community in the State of Connecticut.

While I would have loved to be there today unfortunately I had other commitments so I am writing to show support for the governor's proposed budget for our Commission. We would like to see more funding so we can do more work in the community we understand that these are tough budget times.

In the last year the AAAC has done great work with the legislature on student debt, criminal justice, education and housing. Some of our signature legislative measures were getting all teachers cultural competence training, working on minority teacher recruitment.

Currently I am working with the City of New London and other community partners to address the lack of racial diversity in hiring for their fire department as well as trying to raise money for the AAAC's annual Classic Awards which raises funds for scholarships for students of color to help offset the cost of college.

This year our legislative agenda includes working on legislation to ban the box for private employers, continuing our work to get more minority teachers into the classroom, addressing racial disparities that exist in debt collection and building upon the success of our student debt work.

Again I would like to thank you for your time today,

Stephanie D. Johnson, RPSGT
Commissioner African-American Affairs Commission